THE INDIANA STATE SENTINEL.

VOL. XXII, NO. 2.

INDIANAPOLIS, IND., MONDAY, JUNE 2, 1862.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED EVERY MONDAY AT THE

NO. 2 SOUTH MERIDIAN STREET, OPPOSITE THE POSTOFFICE. ELDER, HARKNESS & BINGHAM

E" necegore fe tones. TERMS OF WEEKLY SENTINEL.

Ten copies to one address, and one to the maker of Twenty copies to one address, and two to the maker of the club..... 20 00 Thirty copies to one address, and one copy of the WEEKLY and one of the DARLY, to the maker

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ELDER, HARKNESS & BINGHAM. J. M. TILFORD, President Indianapolis Journal Company.

All subscriptions invariably in advance. Address ELDER, HARKNESS & BINGHAM, Ind'plis.

Selected Miscellany.

Financial Policy of the Government

Speech of the Hon. D. W. Voorhees, delivered in the House of Representatives, May 21st, 1862.

Mr. Speaker, the financial policy of the Government has always been considered by men of reflection as second only in importance to national honor and national existence. Indeed, no nation can long maintain an honorable existence which makes an unwise or a dishonest use of the resources of its people. It is a fundamental principle of constitutional liberty that the citizen shall own and enjoy the wealth which the labor of his hands extorts from the bosom of the earth, subject only to that portion which he may justly be called upon to pay for the protection of government and the blessings of social order. He has this dominion over the fruits of his toil by divine right, and when this right is invaded by by the Government, through impolicy or fraud, and the citizen is robbed under the forms of law, it becomes his highest duty to repel the invasion and resist the wrong. In a free government this is done through the peaceful instrumentality of the ballot box, and a change in the agents of the people who are responsible for the unnecessary oppression. In despotisms, where the popular toiling millions, when they can endure no more, enforce justice with the sword. But the right to in all ages, and enforced it in every form in which the human will can assert itself.

I humbly conceive to be the unsound, false, and ruinous system of finance which has been imposed upon the people of this country within the last twelve months, and though I have not the claims of age or extended experience, yet I beg to be candidly heard by the House and the counwants, the wishes, the hopes, the fears, the feelings, and the thoughts of the laboring classes are all familiar to me. I was born one of them, reared in their midst, and partook of their toil.

Sir, during the past year we have been engagment to maintain its just authority within its lawful jurisdiction was to be one of the most the pockets of the people. Sir, in view of these creased. facts, what has been the course of those in authority since this war commenced in regard to the I have just quoted, we find that the population great question of national economy? Have our of the United States in the year 1860 was a little hand of the plunderer? Have our public officers culation in the simplest rules of arithmetic shows been held to a rigid accountability in their use of that each individual voter of these five millthe hard-earned revenues of the country? Has ions is in debt to-day \$200 on account of his financial integrity marked the conduct of those proportion of the national expenses, and that one in whom the people placed their trust when the year hence he will be in debt \$400 on the same present Administration came into power? Has account. The liability of my own great State of common honesty been observed by those who won their way to popular confidence by their has been enacted against her by the present fierce denunciations of the alleged corruptions of Congress, will be \$100,000,000, of which former Administrations? I speak not as a par- enormous sum the people of the District which tisan, nor in the spirit of party. I trust I can I have the honor to represent, will stand chargrise above all such considerations; but these are ed with something over twelve millions of dol questions in which the people of all parties have lars. a deep and overwhelming interest, and they are Where, sir, in all the dreary history of profliquestions, too, which all men in every part of gate nations, were ever such burdens as these the country who desire an honest administration imposed on the shoulders of any people in so of our public affairs are now asking with serious short a time? The mourning children of Israel. and startling emphasis. The answer which must captives in the brick-yards of Egypt, were scarcecome, and of which impartial history will make ly more slaves to their Egyptian masters than an everlasting record, is one which bows the head | the American people will be to the constant deand burns the check of every lover of his coun- mands and exactions of the national debt. It try's good name with humiliation and with shame. will come upon them like the lean and hungry ures, not of alluring and captivating fancy, but devour the well-favored and fat-fleshed cattle of figures of cold and repulsive reality. The vail all the land. Tell me not of the blessings of a which a pleasing and hopeful sophistry weaves public debt. That cry is simply the cheat and around its object with which to beguile the peo- the falsehood by which men who have abused

our public debt. It is one of the alarming signs tors in their villas of magnificence, the Bourbons of the times that either from confusion or inca-pacity, or from the shrinking dread of recog-Tuilleries, the Stuarts of England clinging to silence in official quarters in regard to the extent of Government liabilities. We are, however, retime on this floor, and especially by the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, the people that this monstrous heresy is right,

WEEKLY STATE SENTINEL. [Mr. Stevens,] who has a right to speak on that subject as one in authority. From that source we learn that our expenditures have, for many months past, exceeded the enormous sum of NEW SENTINEL OFFICE, months past, exceeded the cholmens at this rate reaches the sum of \$1,095,000,000. That our indebtedness at this moment is equal to that vast amount will hardly be denied by any intelligent and candid person who has had the opportunity to observe the profusion and recklessness with which the resources and the credit of the Government have been used since this most unnatural strife fell like a blight upon the land. A One copy one year \$ 1 00 little more than a year ago we beheld the inflamed and wrathful visage of civil war for the the club...... 10 00 first time disturb, like a baleful comet, the peace of this republic. Since then battles have been fought, equal in numbers engaged, in heroism of conduct and in the ghastly heaps of the slain, to the renowned conflicts of ancient story. Victory, too, under an overruling Providence, has has been reared.

But assuming that the smiles of fortune will

verses are in store for our troops, yet nothing is plainer to the thinking mind which resolves the future by considering the past, than the fact that the expenses of this Government for the ensuing year will fully equal, and most likely surpass, what we have witnessed in the year that has just closed. As our armies push forward their columns into the distant parts of a desolated and impoverished and hostile country, the difficulty and Wdekly Sextiser, will be charged the full Daily rates, with one-half the Weekly rates added. much undigested and crude declamation on this floor in regard to subsisting our forces on the pro-Marriage Notices 50 cents.

Notices of Festivals, Picuics and Excursions, gotten up is simply one of those unsubstantial theories Notices of Festivals, Figures and the reg- which, unhappily for the country, have so plenti-Advertisements leaded and placed under the head of Special Notices, iften lines or over, will be charged double calamities came upon us. All the great authors on the art of war show its absurdity, and our Yearly advertisers to pay quarterly.

Announcing candidates for offices of every description to be charged at the rate of \$1 50 for each name in the Daily, and \$2 in the Daily and Weekly, the same to be, in all cases, paid in advance.

Legal advertisement inserted at the expense of the attorneys ordering, and not delayable for the legal proceedings, but collectable at our usual time. Publishers not accountable for the accuracy of legal advertisements be- sistence of its victorious pursuer. Destruction then marks every field, and war, with its ironmailed hand, scourges the bosom of nature herself into stertility. Attila, the fierce barbarian conqueror, at the head of his ravaging hordes. announced to affrighted Europe that grass would THE DAILY SENTINEL never grow again where the hoofs of his war horse had left their mark. Scarcely less blight-Will be sent by mail or express to subscribers at any point ed will be the track of defeated and retreating Southern armies, when no longer able to meet us in general engagements. But little will be left after their own wants are met, and that little will be destroyed. Our supply trains will have to move with our arraies from the loval States. thus augmenting the public expenditures at every step. It is safe, then, to conclude that the year that is to come, and on which we are just entering-the second year of the war-will swell the indebtedness of this Covernment to the alarming sum of \$2,000,000,000. This amount will have accrued about the time the toiling citizen is fairly called upon to commence the weary task of meeting its awful proportions by taxation. It is a task, sir, that no eye which now beholds the sun will ever see completed. The child is not born, and will not be for more that a hundred years who will escape the visits of the Federal taxgatherer in the incessant labors of future generations to wear away by the steady droppings of a perpetual tax this mountain of debt. This is no high-wrought or extravagant statement, but the

year of the approaching future will but too truly It is said, however, here and elshwhere throughout the country, that we are a nation of inexhaustible resources, of almost fabulous wealth, and that burdens which would cause other Governments to reel and stagger, are as light as feathers to us. This is a pleasing tribute to our national vanity; it sounds well in our self-complacent ears. We have so long been exalted in happiness over all other people, so long blessed in every enjoyment above what God has ever vouchsafed to any other nation, that we are even voice has no weight and cannot be heard, the now unwilling or unable to realize the fact that the hand of affliction has at last fallen upon us with a force almost as cruel as that which visited a man's own, under all circumstances, is an inherent right, and human nature has held it sacred walls. It is true, however, that we abound in wealth. It is true that our lap has been filled with treasure; but things in this world exist principally I have been led to these observations by what by comparison. That which constituted immense wealth a little more than a year ago, in view of a public debt of less than fifty millions, diminishes rapidly when brought to bear on a debt of forty times that amount.

sad and melancholy truth, as each succeeding

By the census report of 1860, we find that the assessed value of all the real and personal proptry while I submit my views in that regard. The erty of the entire United States, both loval and rebellious, is \$12,006,756,585. Thus it will be seen that our public debt is now equal to onetwelfth of all the taxable property of the Government, and that in one year from now, it will I represent such a people on this floor, and I feel my heart swell with pride when I call to my mind be equal to one-sixth of everything the people possess. No cunning and studied speeches made the honest, the loyal, the intelligent, and the industrious constituency whose interests and whose that this is the people's debt, and that they will equality before the law in the distribution of the have it to pay. Every sixth acre of land, every burdens of this Government shall be my theme sixth ox, every sixth horse, every sixth sheep to-day. And with solemn reverence I here say every sixth hog, and every sixth dollar, under that as I shall prove faithful to them to the utmost of my ability, and thus promote the true party now in power, will, in one year from tocause of American prosperity and glory, so may of the Government debt. It will be equal to an day, be covered and swallowed up by the amount interest on every taxable substance in the land ed in a most stupendous war. It assumed, from of sixteen and two-thirds per cent. Every busthe first, proportions of the most terrible magni- ness man knows that in the private transactions tude. Any eye could see at the opening stages of life, such a rate of interest is the speedy pre-of this conflict that the struggle of this Governthe nation on which a weight is imposed is on the brink of overwhelming bankruptcy. In this esterrible and, perhaps, protracted that ever shook timate it will be seen that I have taken the figthe world. Courage, chivalry, patriotism, devo- ures of the census report as they were made tion to the Union and the laws, all came forward | when the unruffled calm of peace and prosperity and still stand ready in an inexhaustible quanti- gave to property its highest value. To what exty. The country has glowed from end to end tent the ravages of war have depreciated this throughout all its vast extent with a fervid love value it is impossible to calculate; but that the for the Government as our fathers made it. But, property of the people of the United States is sordid and practical as it may seem to some, one to-day worth more than two-thirds of what it of the main sinews of war is money, plain money. Was one year ago will not be pretended; and Without it armies do not move and navies do not to the extent of that depreciation is the profloat, and the purse of the nation is to be found in portion which the public debt bears to it, in-

But again. By the census report from which ources been earefully husbanded? Have our more than thirty millions. Of this population public moneys been strictly guarded from the about five millions are voters. A moment's cal-

Let us look calmly and carefully at a few fig- kine rising from the river of Pharach's dream to ple into a slumbering sense of security must be their authority seek to cover up the outrages torn away. Nothing should be hid from the which they have inflicted on a confiding people. honest eve of popular scrutiny. It is the duty of It is as old, too, as crime in high places, or the the Representative to fully portray those facts of principle of base cupidity in the heart of man. vital importance on which the governing power The Pharisees of Jerusalem over their hoarded of this free country, the people, will soon be called gains, the kings of Babylon on their couches of gold, Alexander at his gorgeous banquets, the I presume, sir, that at this time no one can, Sultan in the midst of his soft dalliances of exwith entire accuracy, estimate the amount of pensivelove, corrupt, effeminate Roman Senanizing an appalling truth, we have an unusual their maxims of kingcraft, lustful tyrants, delieved in a great measure upon that point, by the profoundly of the sweets and comforts which statements which have been made from time to flow to the people from that fountain of bitter

seek wisdom and warning on this vital subject people hurled from power because of its corruption the teachings of that great founder of Amerition." And further, that those heavy measures can Democracy, Thomas Jefferson. Discussing of taxation which have been brought forward by this question, in 1813, he said:

At the time we were funding our national debt we heard like a dead pall upon the public, unless before much about "a public debt being a public blessing;" that the stock representing it was a creation of active capital treme measures instituted to resuscitate and refor the aliment of commerce, manufactures, and agricul-ture. This paradox was well adapted to the minds of believers in dreams, and the gulls of that size entered

But, sir, I am well aware that I will be met which the Government suffered a loss of \$70,000. here by the familiar cry that these terrible ex- I read from its concluding portions: penditures are necessary to maintain the existence of the Government and to carry on the war in which we are engaged. To this assertion I return a plain and explicit denial. From whatever quarter it comes whether from high places penditures are necessary to maintain the exto this hour, and to the extent of its fearful proportions, has not been the work of a national nesame that we pay him now, cost this Governcharge. I make it, sir, with no pleasure. I delight not in such things. I love to speak kindly of my fellow-man. I would rather praise than censure. Before my great Judge I can say there is nothing in my heart which desires to drag down or wound any human being in the wide world. I would rather lift men up, if in my power, than abase them. I love, too, their approba tion. But when these wishes and desires of my heart stand in the way of my public duty, they must all be suppressed. The duty, however ungracious and unpleasant, must be performed; and in the case now under consideration it seems to my mind that righteous justice demands the enemies of the human race, and should be so

Sir, as early as last July, when this Congress first met in extraordinary session, the taint of corruption was perceived in the atmosphere of the capital, and a committee, since so celebrated, was raised to investigate and to expose. The result of a portion of the labors of that committee is before the country in the shape of a volume of over eleven hundred pages. The majority of that committee are friends to the party now in power, and the evidence which they have furnished is entitled to full credit. Would that every tax-paying voter of the country! Its dark | going off staggering under the load of hundreds of thoulabyrinths of proven guilt ought to be explored by every intelligent mind. By the solemn testimony of this committee no branch of business connected with the military and naval affairs of this Government seems to have escaped the hunto the soldier's ration, to the purchase of cattle for an entire army; from the blanket on which fications for the defense of the city; from the pistol at the soldier's belt, to the cannon at whose breech he stands in the day of battle; from the war afloat, everywhere and on everything we find the impress of favoritism and of fraud. The a few extracts in proof of my statement. Speak- fairs: ing of contracts for cattle made by the War Department during its management by Mr. Came-

ron, the committee says: We have here not only evidence of gross mismanage ment, a total disregard of the interests of the Govern-ment, and a total recklessness in the expenditure of the ands of the Government, but there is every reason to believe that there was collusion upon the part of the em-ployees of the Government to assist in robbing the Treasury, for, when a conscientious officer refused to pass cattle not in accordance with the contract, he was in effect superseded by one who had no conscientious scruples in matter, and cattle that were rejected by his predeces-

sor were at once accepted.

With such a state of things existing, if officers of the integrity enough to have a care of the means of the Treasury are ready to assist speculating contractors to extort upon and defraud the Government, where is this system ulation to end, and how soon may not the fina of the Government be reduced to a woful bankruptcy?

Again, on the same subject:

In this matter there is much evidence of gross mismanement and culpable carelessness in making contracts bids, or any effort being made by the agents of the Gov-ernment to satisfy themselves whether the prices to be

Speaking of the employment of Alexander Government has lost large sums of money, the

Mr. Cummings had no general acquaintance with busifriend of the Secretary of War, "and acquainted with the internal arrangements and connections of the railroads of the public morals, and a ruinous profligacy in the exenditure of the public treasure, organizing an army of

peril and the necessity for immediate action justified these irresponsible expenditures of the public money with no

by the late Secretary of War, the committee concerns of the Government. There is one dark tate a loss of over ninety thousand dollars to chapter more to which I wish to call the attention the Government in one transaction, and say: of the House and the country. I allude to the No Government that ever has existed can sustain itself melancholy history of the military department

for the public service the committee sum up as God that this Republic could have been spared ecord of evidence accompanying this report, that the arties to these discreditable transactions had a perfect

derstanding with each other, and engaged in a system he over-taxed finances of the Government and the confidence of a generous and patriotic people demanded the Sir, in view of this dark record of atrocious guilt, it is no wonder that the chairman of the

mittee [Mr. Van Wyck], in his speech of February 7, on this floor, should exclaim: The mania for stealing seems to have run through all the relations of Government. Almost from the general to the drummer boy, from those nearest the throne of power to the merest tide-waiter. Nearly every man who cals with the Government seems to feel or desire that it has been conscientiously told. There is no es-

Again the chairman says:

other can obtain contracts which bear enormous profits.

The Department which has allowed conspiracies after bidding but been closed to defraud the Government of the lowest bid, and by allowing the guilty to reap the fruits of their crime, has itself become particeps criminis.

ence. It is not a document to be treated in that way. It emanates from a source of the highest responsibility. It is the work of honest, faithful labor. No malice from personal griefs

then all check or restraint on extravagance and And well might the able and fearless memwasteful indulgence at once are withdrawn, and ber of the committee from Massachusetts, [Mr. avarice and corruption are left free to prey with Dawes, in view of these revelations, also assert. unbridled license on the substance of the nation. as he did before the House and the country, that It is alarming, sir, that this fatal doctrine is "startling facts have come to the notice of the found creeping into the debates of the American | committee, and to the notice of the whole country, Congress. Has it come to this? Has this great touching the mode and manner of the expenditure nation, so famed for its wealth and pecuniary responsibility, been driven so soon to seek refuge a Republican Administration, which came into in the mischievous principle that it is a national benefit to be sunk in indebtedness? It becomes ment, there is indubitable evidence abroad in the the people, before it is too late, to arouse them- land that somebody has plundered the public selves against this baleful dogma of despotism, Treasury well nigh in that single year as much and prove to the world that they are worthy of the freedom which they as yet possess. Let them ernment during the Administration which the

already gorged pockets of public plunderers." We are warranted, then, in affirming that this parody on the principle of a public debt, being a public blessing and its mutation into the blessing of private instead of and corruption in the management of our public affairs, as furnished by the proceedings of this House, I proceed to other fields. The result of And again, in a letter to Albert Gallatin, this the labors of this committee are before the counprofound statesman and political philosopher try, and I can do no more in my brief hour than to extract a few conclusive centences. But in-But if the debt should once more be swelled to a form- vestigation of this kind has not been confined idable size, its entire discharge will be dispaired of, and we shall be committed to the English career of debt, corruption, rottenness, closing with revolution. The discharge of the debt, therefore, is vital to the destinies of our Government, and it hangs on Mr. Madison and yourval Affairs, relating to one single transaction in

the Committee of Ways and Means would "fall

ever quarter it comes, whether from high places or low places, it is not true. The public debt up his purpose may have been in the selection, it cannot fail his purpose may have been in the selection, it cannot fail to give rise to suspicions that other motives than a single purpose to subserve the public interests may possibly have nenced the choice that was made. The time, too, at cessity, nor the creation of honest hands. The Mexican war, though a foreign and distant one, and disproportionate amount of the public money was in which we paid the soldier substantially the paid for so inconsiderable a service, was peculiarly unfortunate. The country was engaged in a war in which its very existence was at stake. The nation had been arouse ment, under the wise and honest administration and was contributing men and money without stint to deof James K. Polk, in proportion to the numbers engaged—man for man—but little more than one-fourth the amount now being expended on a war waged at our very door steps. Of course I do not deny that heavy expenses have been properly incurred; but that fraud and crime in their alike called upon to aid in bearing the burden which redarkest hues have swollen to an overwhelming amount the pecuniary liabilities of the people I this was borne, and would have been borne cheerfully, if stand ready to prove. I shall ask no man to decide without the evidence to sustain so serious a the purposes for which it was raised. But when they se ase sums lavished upon personal or political favorites for small and inconsiderable services, confidence in and the very existence of the nation is imperiled.

And in commenting on this alarming state of corruption in the Navy Department, a very distinguished Senator [Mr. Hale] used the following

strong language: When the country was taxing itself as it never had be re, when it was bleeding at every pore, when new and untried sources of revenue were resorted to, when you were taxing the necessaries of the humblest inhabitant of its citizens, and they were sending their young men to the field and giving their money to the Treasury—at that time task before me. The authors of a grinding ex-tortion from the weary hands of honest labor are was to turn, Goorge D. Morgan, a merchant of New York, ceiving from the hard earnings of this hard-taxed people a compensation equal to about twelve thousand dollars a

I regret to see what has been stated in several of the spers, not that they believed this was an honest trans-ction, not that it was a fair one, not that it was one that erved to receive the approbation and the sanction of the Government; but the excuse is, that it is not half so bad as what has been done in other cases; and I have no the investigating committees go on they will find that there have been transaction compared with which \$70,-000 was a small sum, and that it will be considered ungra cious to call up one of these petty offenders that has only a volume of it could be placed in the hands of taken \$70,000 and deal with him when there are others

tax to pay the interest on that loan, to maintain the pubth, and to enable your armies to prosecute this war cessfully. I ask you, Senators, with what face you can go home to your constituents when they see this thing gry grasp of unlawful avarice and peculation. which they all know and understand; when they see that From the smallest article of food which enters in- \$70,000 have been paid for the services of one man for ess than six months at a time of such distress as this, and the tired soldier sleeps at night, to the vast forti- to the wheel and forward this car? Sir, I do not know what other men may do; I cannot; I dare not, I should nt me out as reckless and faithless for being here a mber of the Senate, in this hour of our country's peril. meanest transport sloop to the mightiest man-of- if I had failed to rebuke proffigacy in the expenditure of

Again this Senator exclaims, from his extenreport of this committee is before, you and I submit sive knowledge of the management of our af-

> I do not know but I may over-estimate, entirely overtimate, the character of this transaction; but I tell you, sir, I believe, and I declare it upon my responsibility as a Senator of the United States, that the liberties of this country are in greater danger to-day from the corruptions and from the profligacy practiced in the various Departments of this Government than it is from the open enemy

Sir, I might here pause and dwell upon this

terrible accusation, coming from a quarter so high and so fully entitled to credit. A hostile army has been for a year in sight of this capitol. Treason has usurped by far the largest portion of the territory of the United States; our rivers have been turned to blood; our mountains have become Golgothas; our valleys are the burial places of our first-born, slain in battle; the wail of mothers, wives, and daughters goes up from one ocean to the other as the voice of Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted because they are not; the very sun above gether with a reckless improvidence of the means of a Government. Evidence exists of large contracts for attle having been made without any advertisement for yet, in the midst of these thickening signs of nature of the means o tional calamity, it is announced by a Senator who helped to place this Administration in pow-er, and emphasized by an appeal to his senato-Cummings by Mr. Cameron, then Secretary of rial honor, that a more deadly evil than them all War, to fill an important contract by which the combined is now assaulting the existence of the Government-"that the liberties of this country are in greater danger to-day from the corruptions and from the profligacy practiced in the various ness in New York. He had been a newspaper editor in Pennsylvania for twelve years, and had been in New York as the publisher of another paper for some eighteen months. He was the intimate personal and political ty, of every creed, and of every faith, to give ear Departments of this Government than it is from ty, of every creed, and of every faith, to give ear to this warning, and to defend themselves at the of Pennsylvania," over which supplies are to be shipped, and he is invested with the control of \$2,000,000 to purchase equipments for our army, and charter vessels for transporting troops and supplies. He takes no oath and gives no bond.

great tribunal of the ballot-box against wrongs so wicked, oppression so inhuman, crimes so revolting. I abhor treason; my soul has never sympathised with the designs of a traitor to the Consuch a system of public policy must lead inevitably to stitution of my country; I would stand here and voritism at the public expense, the corruption | consume all my time in denunciation of the fatal doctrine of secession and all its deplorable oppers and miners whose covert assaults on the nation | consequences, if any result would thus be acwould scarcely be less effective than the open assaults of complished; but when I find proven offenses in our own midst of sufficient enormity to prostrate any nation that ever had a place on the pages of Can the Secretary of War pretend that the national history, if not speedily checked, I see not why I should pass them by, in order to discuss a subsettlement for four months afterwards, even if there had been no responsible and experienced public officers in New York to perform the duties. I have not, however, completed my proof of the charge which I make of general and wide-On the subject of buying arms, as conducted spread fraud in the management of the financial

with such improvidence in the management of its affairs. of the West, as written by the committee on In regard to the purchase of horses and wagons | war claims, at the city of St. Louis. | Would to this additional and most bitter cup of shame It appears from all the evidence which is detailed in the | The report of this committee is so extraordinary so utterly amazing in its monstrous revelations of lawlessness, and fierce, devouring cupidity of corrupt pecuniary gains by means of requisitions and that the mind almost refuses a belief in its state-receipts signed in blank, and false invoices, at a time when ments. I venture to assert that it is without a parallel in the recorded transactions of any nation on the face of the civilized earth. But painful and humiliating as the facts therein con tional name, yet the character of the gentlemen who compose that committee, eminent alike for their ability, their patriotism, and their integrity. together with the clear and unquestioned eviwould not long survive, and each had a common right to cape from this damning exposure. Its light is as scorching, withering as the hot blasts of the simoon of the desert. It will not do for gen-While it is no justification, the example has been set in the very Departments of the Government. As a general thing none but favorites gain access there, and none attempt by studied silence to ignore its exist-

show the general license and corruption which quarter of the world will be complete: prevailed. My time forbids more than this.

In July, 1861, General Fremont, surrounded by his personal and political favorites, gathering from the Atlantic sea-board and the coast of the rank of Major General, and established his head-quarters in the city of St. Louis. He at once proceeded to inaugurate a system in the purchase of military supplies, of which the committee speak as follows:

I have shown that by the deliberation of the faithful performance of his duties, when the services of competent public officers were available, and by involving the Government in a vast number of contracts with persons not legitimately engaged in the business pertaining to the subject matter of such contracts, especially in the purchase of arms for future delivery, has adopted a policy highly injurious to the public service, and deserves the censure of this House.

confined to tents, but extended to every portion of the field of army supplies which was sufficiently fruitful to attract the avarice of this class of men. Honest mechanisms and in the supplies which was sufficiently fruitful to gan, has unlawfully extorted from the tax-payics who had tents for sale, merchants who had supplies which the Government peeded, and men from the country offering horses and mules were turned from the Quarteroffering horses and mules were turned from the Quartermaster's office without a conference, and driven down into the meshes of the "middle men," to become, in Cabinet council, wears fine linen and fares common with the Government, a prey to their rapacity.

tice under it was a new page of corruption. lanthropic cities of the North for the want of bread. the report before me bear witness:

heads of the honest and competent officers appointed by law. It seemed to be his purpose to present himself as the embodiment of political and military power, and to show alike by his words and his conduct how little he depended upon the Government of his country, and how utterly he disregarded its laws, its regulations, and its policy. Of course such an example could not be otherwise than contagious. The whole frame-work of the realized and military systems as organized by law was everywhere prevailed. There could be no obedience when the General of the Department openly taught and practiced resistance to the laws as a right, if not a duty. There could be no economy where the General expo-ed himself continually to imputations of labering in his great office to feed the greed of his followers for gain. He occupied, with his family and several members of his staff, a marble palace, and lived, amid its luxurious furn glittering wares, at a stipulated expense of \$6,000 per annum to the Government, at a time when the homes of millions of our people were darkened by the horrors of civil war. Could it be expected that his subordinates would display any special sympathy with our national sufferings, or any marked solicitude to guard the public Treasury from plunder? Instead of going to Cairo, as he could have done for a few dollars on one of the vessels transporting the troops which accompanied him, he charsteamer was anchored out in the stream instead of lying at the wharf as all others did and do, and when the General drove in his carriage and four to the water's edge, yet another steamer, at still further cost to the Govern-ment, as we learn from a claim presented for it, was employed to put himself and suit on board. A foreign might thus live and thus enter his pleasure yacht or his barge of state, but insensibility amid the calamities of civil war, and wastefulness, when the public debt is being

complete this wretched picture of public de- hundred thousand men. furnished. The following extract from the re- ment must not fail to meet the requirements of foot the liberties of his Government:

peachable integrity and intelligence—will, we are sure, be heard by the Government with equal astonishment and sorrow. Gen. Fremont proclaims, on assuming his determination to administer his department without reference to law or regulations; that the people of the Uni-ted States were in the field, and that he was at their head, and that he meant to carry out such measures a they, the people, expected him to carry out, 'without regard to the red tape' of the Washington people"—that is, the President and Congress. It is singular how perfectly these sentiments harmonize with those held by the asurpers who in this and other ages of the world have sought and established absolute power upon the ruins of public liberty. Some of these usurpers, taking yet higher ground than that assumed in the interview with Colonel ry out" the will of God, but none of them have sunk the will of the people. Casar, when he stood upon the banks of the Rubicon and waved to his veterans to advance, did not make a bolder declaration against his coun-'red tape" always do it with their swords, and history proves that the throat of their country suffers quite as much as does the "tape" in the operation. As free justi of the people and their representatives, civil and military, to it, this expression of a purpose to cast aside all political and constitutional restraints, made in the halls of legislation even, would alarm, but when made in the field by a chieftain, at the head of a great army, it chills and awes the patriot's heart by its particidal spirit, it reveals an unscrupulous smbition, which awaits but the prestige and

power of victory to sweep the Government itself, as a cobweb, from its path.

This sad page in the history of the late commander of this department gathers a deep shadow from the circum-stances under which these declarations were made. Gen. Fremont had a few weeks before taken and subscribed the following military oath: "I, John C. Fremont, do solemuly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against their enemies or opposers whom-so-ever; and that I will observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the offi-harrow, the reaper and the threshing machine cers over me, according to the rules and articles of war." He thus, in sight of God and his country, had plighted faith with his Government that he would bear to it "true" coat of arms of our nobility. The soil is our allegiance," and he stood pledged by the most solemn of fruitful mother, and we are her children. We human sanctions to support that Constitution which, when "the people are in the field," places "at their head" the President of the United States, and not any General holdhe had been summoned from the obscurity of private life, and, preferred above the veterans and a whole army of patriots, he was made a Major General Scarcely has be girded on his sword, to whose honor the best interests of of law or of the Government, but in defiance of both, to we live should protect us in its enjoyment. enforce such measures as, in his judgment, "the people expected him to carry out." These words were spoken, as it were, in the very sick chamber of the Republic, and as if were, in the very sick chamber of the Republic, and had the tone of the undertaker while the patient was yet struggling for life. They were uttered against the Government of a country, not then tranquil and strong and able to battle with all assailants, but of a country distracted and humbled, and bleeding under the stab: of traitors. They came from no flush of excitement springing from a triumph of arms, but were the solemn and oftthe strength of his gathering army. They were addressed to officers of high rank in the service, and were intended to impress them with obedience to his revolutionary programme. Gen. Fremont already held the sword, and it was most important for his purposes that Col. Andrews, the head of the pay department here, and Maj. Johnson, a paymaster under him, should not interfere with his free

use of the national purse. to the unhallowed scenes of the Roman Cæsars? great philosophic poet says that

"Corruption wins not more than honesty." the Russian Emperor may draw in regard to the must be given to high prices. Every school boy American sense of public morality will not, per- in political science knows who pays this increase

or political rivalry can be charged against it. haps, advance us much in his estimation. Let Let us see then how so fair, so able a report deals Mr. Cameron present the following resolution, with the idol to which a great party has linked adopted so recently by this House, as a part of its sinking fortunes. I can quote but enough to his credentials, and our degradation in that

Resolved, That Simon Cameron, late Secretary of War, by investing Alexander Cummings with the control of large sums of the public money, and authority to purchas military supplies without restriction, without requiring

I have shown that, by the deliberate finding of This system, alike fatal to the pecuniary interests of a regular committee of the Senate, the present he Government and the morality of the service, was not Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles, in con-Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, in connection with his brother-in-law, George D. Mor-Starting with such a system, each day's prac-children of soldiers have died in the great phi-

the Government of \$250,000, or in the infinite I have shown that a commission of most emifolly of building a worthless pontoon bridge at Paducah, at another loss of \$120,000, whether self have proven, conclusively proven, that the in ordering the construction of railroad cars, at blighting touch of John C. Fremont during his a loss of \$75,000, or in the purchase of forage, by which \$100,000 was plundered from the peo- defrauded the people of millions, filled the bloatple; whether in the purchase of arms, of cloth- ed purses of his favorites by fraud, demoralized ing, the building of boats, the purchase of horses, the public service in every branch and sought to mules, and their equipments, the rent of houses, destroy the Constitution itself. The exhausted of barracks, of steamboats, the use of railroads soldier is put to death for yielding to irresistible and the telegraph lines, in all, in everything, slumber at his post, the victim of pinching pover-everywhere, all pervading and omnipresent fraud ty is sent to the penitentiary for stealing provisof the boldest and most audacious character is ion for his wife and children; but this exalted discovered and dragged to light by the labors of criminal finds approval for his conduct, is surthis committee. It is not, sir, poor, pitiful, rounded by flatterers, is restored to the field and sneaking fraud, but fraud of gigantic dimensions, sits in the saddle of command and of power. Sir, and of a daring satanic aspect. It is fraud such | Cicero brought the haughty Verres to trial and as a corrupt and aspiring consul of Rome might to condemnation for his fraudulent practices in commit in some distant and opulent province, the Sicilian province; and Burke enriched the when he cast his ambitious and longing gaze upon the imperial purple. It is fraud such as tortionate measures imposed by Warren Hastings has marked the career in all ages of those who entertained the usurper's designs against the liberties of their country. That I do not state this case too strongly, let the following extracts from no official delinquent brought to answer to the law for the plunder of the public treasury, but The most stupeadous contracts, involving an almost un- rather we have seen the perpetrators of these precedented waste of the public money, were given out by him [Gen. Fremont] in person to favorites, over the and of favor, and mounted to still loftier hights

political and military systems, as organized by law, was eration of a few other points properly in this connection, and which I conceive to be of public in-

We seek to take refuge, sir, from the enormous figures of our national indebtedness whenever they are brought to our attention, in the fact that we can defer its payment, and bequeath it as an inheritance to coming generations. Admitting that this unworthy thing may to some extent be done, vet let us see, for a few moments, what amount of money this Government will be compelled annually to raise in order to prevent open and confessed bankruptcy before the world. I will content myself with a specific statement of the various items of current yearly expense which tered a magnificent steamer, at a cost of \$1,600 to the Government, to convey himself and cortege alone. This correctness of this statement I challenge success-

ful contradiction: The interest on the public debt, at a very low estimate, \$100,000,000.

The ordinary expenses of the Government, including appropriations for the increased magnitude of the army and navy after the war is over, will reach \$150,000,000 at another low estimate. I am especially warranted in fixing this amount increased at the rate of from one to two millions daily, when exhibited by a General of the American army, is a in view of the declaration on this floor by the spectacle from which the patriot may well turn away in | Chairman of the Committee on Military Affairs, [Mr. Blair, of Missouri,] that hereafter our peace Sir, there was but one thing more needed to establishment will consist of a standing army of a

bauchery and crime, and that, unhappily, was The pension list comes next. This Governport of the committee shows that Major General | civilization and humanity. It must and will John C. Fremont conspired to overthrow the provide for the support of its maimed and Constitution of his country, and trample under wounded, and for the maintenance of the widows and orphans of those who have fallen on the field of battle, or been stricken down The statements of these witnesses-officers of unimby disease while in the public service. It is of course difficult to calculate the amount which will be required to meet this item of command, that "there were no longer any civil rights; which will be required to meet this item of that there was no Government except that outside of the expense; but no well informed person will Constitution, which had been suspended; that it was his pretend that it will be less than the sum of \$100,000,000.

To the above must be added at least \$50,000,-000 more as a margin for claims against the Government, contingent expenses and unforseen events during this convulsive and unsettled peri-

od of the world's history. We have thus an inevitable annual expenditure, without making any provision whatever for the payment of the public debt itself, of the sum of \$400,000,000. This amount will make its demands on the resources of the people in each succeeding year, as regularly as the seasons come and go, and in a voice as imperative and inexorable as the cry of fate. You need not avert try than this. The words, so earnestly and often spoken, announced a revolution conceived, but which, happily, most happily for the country, the parent had not the strength to bring forth. No man has lived in the tide of times wise and pure enough to be intrusted with such a power as is here claimed. Military chieftains who cut annual burden on the shoulders of the American people. And now, sir, bearing this fearful fact in mind, from which there is now no escape, the question necessarily arises with immense, overwhelming force, as to what system of finance shall be adopted to raise annually this

I live, Mr. Speaker, in a land of corn, in a land where the fruits of the earth constitute the reward of labor. I live in a great valley, beside whose agricultural wealth the famed valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile and the richest fields of Europe sink into utter insignificance, and whose more than Egyptian granaries invite the harrow, the reaper and the threshing machine are our implements of industry, and compose the mission under him. With a confiding fondness those other necessary articles of life which are give us the best returns. This we conceive to ordinates and followers that he draws it, not in the name | be our right, and that the Government in which

But turn to the contemplation of another region of this country. You there behold the land of manufacturing machinery, and hear the sound of the loom and the spindle. The people of the North and East make fabrics of cloth, and manufsature all those articles which man needs, and which do not grow. These constitute their wealth ated enunciations of a General just entering the field and their stock of merchandise for trade. The of his future operations, and surveying for the first time markets of the world are open to them, and of right ought to be. The West is an immense consumer of those articles which they have to sell. We are willing to buy of them of our own choice if we can buy them as cheap as we can elsewhere. But I here averthat the unequal and unjust system of finance now adopted by the party in power gives to the vast manufacturing in-Sir, in what age do we live? Is this the age terests of this country the arbitary power to fix its own exorbitant prices, and the laboring agricultransported to the days of fraudulent usurpers, turist is compelled to pay them. To this no peoto the unhallowed scenes of the Roman Cæsars? ple can submit. Against this outrage the people Are we in republican America, or have we, by of the West will cry out. You have fastened some magic process, been suddenly dropped down upon this country the most odious system of tarin the midst of Oriental luxury and kingly in- iff on imported goods that ever paralyzed the endulgence? Has the Administration of this Gov-ergies of a nation or oppressed its agricultural ernment sought for a model among the principles citizens. You say by that tariff that the manuof Washington and Jefferson, or from the exam- facturing institutions of this country shall not be ples of Tiberius, Caligula, and Domitian? The brought in competition with those of other parts of the world. You say that our ports shall be closed to foreign traders for fear they will under-But is that true in these latter days? I have sell the manufacturer of New England or the shown that, by the deliberate finding of a com- fronmonger of Pennsylvania. You require of mittee raised under the anthority of this House, and by the action of the House itself, the late pay, and thus you banish him from our commer-Secretary of War, Simon Cameron, is declared | cial intercourse. You say to the Western farmguilty, in this awful crisis, of plundering, and er, to the agriculturist everywhere, that there with criminal knowledge permitting to be plunshall be but one market in which they may buy. dered, the resources of the people, the Treasury You drive them to the counters and founderies of his country. With that brand upon him, he of men whom you protect in a monopoly of the steps from one exalted station to another, and sales which they make. You do this for the sole goes as our accredited minister to the court of and avowed reason that goods from abroad can the greatest and most friendly power to us on the be sold here cheaper than they can be made and continent of Europe. The conclusions which sold by our own citizens, and that a protection

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of price. Need I, at this period of American history, discuss the operations of a high protective tariff? Need I stop to show its folly and its injustice? No, sir. It is one of the settled questions of governmental policy. Twenty years ago it was fairly tried, and the American people passed an intelligent verdict of condemnation against it. It was fully heard by greater advocates than it has to-day, and repudiated as an unfair and ruinous system. If any question was ever, in the history of this Government, distinct-ly tried before a tribunal of the people and condemned, it was the question of a protective tariff. The country prospered by its repudiation, and the laborer bought where his money would buy most. But this issue has again risen, and in a shape more offensive and injurious to the true interests of the country than ever before. The present tariff is one which no party in the past would have sanctioned. It would have alarmed the old Whig party as much as any other by its stringent and prohibitory features. It goes far beyond what was deemed wise or prudent by the strongest protectionists of former high tariff periods. And now allow me to state some of its specific practical operations as a part of the financial policy of the present hour.

It forces the laboring man, the consumer, the farming classes generally, to pay for manufactured articles, which embrace a large portion of the necessities of life, an increased price over their proper value and over that for which they can elsewhere be bought of from forty to one hundred per cent. Thus a tax of most fearful rate is levied on one branch of industry, not to support the Government, but to contribute as a gratuitous donation to a privileged and favored business. That is the first extortionate species of taxation which meets us in the examination of this subject. It is one which at any time would fall with oppressive cruelty on a large ma-jority of the loyal people of the country; but, at a time like this, when the Government itself is claiming almost the entire substance of the land for its maintenance, no language can be found sufficiently strong with which to characterize the

enormity of such a policy. In the next place, the present tariff robs the Government of a much-needed revenue by keeping imported goods from our shores. Under its operations during the past year, according to a statement made a few weeks since in the British Parliament by the Chancellor of the English Exchequer, our importations from Great Britain alone have fallen off to the amount of \$85,000,000. The report on the finances of our own Government for the year ending June 30, 1861, shows a loss in our receipts arising from customs during the first three months after this tariff went into operation of over ten millions of dollars as compared with the receipts during a similar period a year previous. Under the tariff of 1846, a revliberal terms of trade with foreign nations, and richly obtained. The rule is now reversed, and for the unworthy purpose of protecting a class of business which ought to sustain itself or be abandoned, this great fountain of pecuniary support to the nation is dried up. It no longerflows nto the Treasury, and the money which is thus diverted from the public to private and individual benefit, has to be replaced under this Administration by direct and specific taxes on the people. Thus taxation grows and augments its alarming proportions in order that the interests of a favored few may be cherished and pro-

But the manner in which this taxation is to be levied, and in which it is to affect the different interests of the country exceeds all the preceding features of criminal outrage on those who live by producing from the soil. By the provisions of the tax bill which recently passed this House a tax of three per cent. ad valorem is laid upon all articles of manufacture in the hands of the manufacturer. It is estimated that there will thus be raised \$50,000,000 of the annual income arising from taxation. This the manufacturing interest is to pay for the support of the Govern-

ment, and the airs of patriotism which are assumed in consequence are eminently characteristic. But inasmuch as this manufacturing interest is guarded by a Morrill tariff from all competition in selling, and strictly protected in increasing its prices of sale to its forced customers, to an almost unlimited extent, will any one, in his simplicity, pretend that the three per cent. wherewith it is taxed, the \$50,000,000 which it has to pay, will not be charged up to the buver when its goods are sold? The tariff and taxation are kindred measures, born of a common origin, and, like leashed hounds, hunt for their innocent prey coupled together. The tariff stands guard over the interests of the manufacturer, while taxation hunts for every other substance in the land on which to fasten its fangs. And if, for the sake of appearance, the manufacturing interest is mentioned in a tax bill, the tariff steps forward and enables its cherished friends to recover back every dollar which they are assessed by raising the price of the woolen cloths, the linens, the muslins, the calicoes, the plowshares, and the implements of husbandry, and the articles of daily necessity which the American Government forces its citizens to buy of its protected monopolists. This is the culmination, the climax of wrong. A Government which plunders one citizen to enrich another needs the strong, stern hand of reform on

Though perfect equality should prevail in meeting the immense taxation which is coming like a mountain avalanche upon this people, yet it will be born amid sorrow and weary pain; but when it shall all fall virtually on a given class of citizens it will become an intolerable, suffocating nightmare of ruin and of death. I challenge the attention of the country that such is the working of the present system, which it is pretended has been adopted for the support of the Government. Already we see its effects. The great maunfacturing corporations of the East are crowding their bloaded pockets with rapid and gigantic gains. Their dividends of profits are swollen some thirty, some sixty, and some an hundred fold. This is no random statement, but is sustained by the statistics before me. It is a fact, too, of which the whole country has taken cognizance.

Sir, no sectional boundaries to my love of

country prompts these remarks. I call God to

witness with what devotion I love every sod and rock and river, mountain, prairie, and forest of my native land. For its happiness and glory it would be sweet and honorable to die. I reckon no section of it above another. It is all alike to me, all dear and hallowed by the principles of constitutional liberty. But I speak in the name of instice, which is everywhere present, in the name of fraternal and American equality, and I ask you, I implore you, to look at the condition of the Western people. Their interests have been abandoned on this floor by more than half their Representatives, and they stand to-day bearing the hard brunt of the pitiless storm which has burst from the angry sky. They are shut out from all the fair markets for their produce. Their natural channels of trade to the South are closed by the impious hand of war, and their avenues to the markets of the North are obstructed by the avarice of railroads. It costs sixty cents to freight a bushel of corn from the Wabash river to New York, and leaves from seven to fourteen cents to the farmer, who has caused it to grow and gathered it in, as the reward of his toil. For everything else he receives the same beggarly return. And yet who has lifted up his voice here in behalf of that great, that honest and oppressed people? Where is their representative in the Committee of Ways and Means, that great despotic committee which matures measures of tariff, of taxation, and of finance, and whose decrees on this floor are as unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians? On that committee, which speaks the voice of fate for the weal or woe of the tax-payers of all the land, the great imperial domain of the West, from the feet of the Alleghany mountains to the Pacific ocean, has had no member during this important session. Blow after blow has fallen on her naked head, and now she stands exposed to the payment of four-fifths of all the burdens which this Government has to bear. I speak advisedly. She has been trampled under foot. Her rights have been disregarded. She has been plundered for the benefit of others. And from here I call upon her to vindicate herself, to assert her equality, to resist oppression, to scorn the tribute which she is called upon to pay to a branch of industry which God and nature never intended she should support to demand from her Government the same protection which others obtain, and to reckon with her oppressors at the ballot-box. As for me, I shall join in no such system of injustice, inequality and wanton extortion against the people whose interests are confided to my care in this House. I shall resist it in all constitutional methods, and denounce it everywhere; and in doing so I shall